

Mirroring of a text in translation methods

Brisset Alberi K.

The Department of translationg and foregn literatures of Sorbonna Univ.
France, Paris

brisset_alb@ucla.net

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Abstract

Both representation and the determination of narrative are economic notions of this kind. So, too, is the conception of the novel that I indicated. But a certain literary writing attests to an aneconomic experience, an experience of a genuine heterogeneity. It refers to an interruption of the most human capacity of the animal who speaks, that is, the bestowal of meaning, nomination. Everyday language uses the name to identify the thing, idealizing it, taking it into the universal. But this is to lose the thing in its real existence. The living thing and its name are not identical; the word can only encounter the thing as an instance of a universal, as a particular that awaited idealization. The literary writing in question, by contrast, understands that the negation of the word gives the thing a new, ideal existence as a word. As Blanchot puts it, "it observes that the word 'cat' is not only the nonexistence of the cat but a nonexistence made word, that is, a completely determined and objective reality" (Work 325). This sort of literary language would become thing-like, transposing the singularity of the thing into language. It realizes that in listening to a single word, one can hear nothingness "struggling and toiling away, it digs tirelessly, doing its utmost to find a way out, nullifying what encloses it--it is infinite disquiet, formless and nameless vigilance" (Work 326). Thus the work of literature realizes something unreal and non-representational, letting non-existence exist as a kind of "primal absence," not as the sign of absent things but as a thing itself, as an object made of words

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Introduction

To write, as Blanchot observes of Mallarmé, "is not to evoke a thing but an absence of thing... words vanish from the scene to make the thing enter, but since this thing is itself no more than an absence, that which is shown in the theater, it is an absence of words and an absence of thing, a simultaneous emptiness, nothing supported by nothing" (Work49). And yet, words must mean if literature is to be readable. And indeed, the poem, made of language, cannot become a thing. The lit-

erary work must allow itself to become a cultural object, available and accessible. Likewise, the literary writer may always become a great writer whose work evidences a mastery of narrative modes, of incident and characterization, who is lauded because his or her work can reflect back the glories of the world. It is this tendency in the literary work that Blanchot captures when he invokes the novel. The work of literature becomes the novel when it fails to become an autonomous thing unto itself. In so doing, it becomes impure and non-absolute because it depends on the world it mirrors: "Willing to represent imaginary lives, a story or a society that it proposes to us as real, it depends on this reality of which it is the reproduction or equivalent"; it is always in collusion with a certain mimetologism (*Work* 191).

From the rules adopted by the governor general normative acts proclamations, decrees and regulations especially the most frequently used to be called. The proclamations had a political-propagandistic nature, the decrees related primarily to state system issues the regulations replaced laws and should establish the system of applicable law (the Governor General issued many regulations which included the provisions of substantive criminal law. I analyze it in following in this article). Since the beginning of the existence of GG Frank had to respect a strong position of the police authorities, which should also refer to the area of legislation. The package of legislation from the 10.26.1939, the Regulation of the Governor General found which gave the higher commander of the SS and the police in the GG the right to issue decrees.

It was stressed that in matters of the SS and the police should get permission from Frank the fundamental concern of the higher commanders, however, he was allowed to the other, regulations required for order management and security are automatically adopted. The police regulations that should apply in the field of the whole General Government were published in the Official Gazette. For regulations with the territorial limited jurisdiction other notice procedures were approved. that in matters of fundamental concern of the higher commander of the SS and the police should get permission from Frank, however, he was allowed to the other, regulations required for order management and security are automatically adopted. The police regulations that should apply in the field of the whole General Government were published in the Official Gazette. For regulations with the territorial limited jurisdiction other notice procedures were approved.*¹⁰The role of an official medium filled the "Official Gazette of the Governor General of the occupied Polish territories", which was issued in parallel since 10.31.1939 in the Basic Law and in the

realm. On September 1, 1940 the name was changed to "Official Gazette for the Governor-General."

After the end of hostilities in October 1939, Germany has made a division of the occupied territories of the Polish state. The northern and eastern regions (including Greater Poland, Silesia, Eastern Pomerania) were incorporated into the Third Reich. From the remaining areas (Little Poland Mazovia, Lublin region) was on 26.10.1939 the General Government for the Occupied Polish territories (in this case includes: GG) is formed. On 07/31/1940 its name was changed to the General Government. This was divided into four districts: Warsaw, Radom, Lublin and Krakow. After the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941, the Basic Law has been increased by the fifth district of Galicia. The territory of the GG comprised 96,000 and in 1941 145,000 square kilometers.*¹

The General was a structure of an unclear structural-legal position. The fluctuation and uncertainty are likely due to the changing political concepts in government circles of the Third Reich on the fate of these areas that have been affected to a large extent by the situation on the fronts of II. World War. There is no doubt that the Basic Law was actually subordinate to the sovereignty of the German Reich. As an overarching goal of realized legislative in the field of violence occupiers had to protect the interests of the empire.*²

Most emphatically, it came just in the area of criminal law expressed, followed in the same act by the judicial organs of a State,*³

Because of Hitler's decree of 12.10.1939 (entered into force on 26.10.) A dualistic legal form in the GG designed. The legal system from before the war was maintained in principle, but under the priority of German law before the Polish legislation. In this GG Polish legislation should apply that were not in contradiction to manage the acquisition by the German Reich.*⁴In practice, it has been found that even the officials of the occupation apparatus harbored a lot of doubt as to the enforceability of Polish law. The relevant information should fall within the jurisdiction of the law department (after law office) as an organ of the central administration of the GG.*⁵

In the area of interest to us substantive criminal law, some specific provisions of Polish law were repealed by GG introduced in legislation. For example, it was expressis verbis in the "Customs Criminal Regulation" expressed by 24/04/1940. "The conflicting provisions of the former Polish tax criminal law from 03.11.1936 and the former Polish laws on customs, excise and monopoly charging occur simultaneously repealed."*⁶In practice, the Okkupationsrealien were crucial in the scope of the criminal law of the II. Republic of Poland. Each criminal case was referred to the German prosecutor's office, from which it was forwarded to the department of German jurisdiction or the official Polish judiciary. The occupiers held upright the limited system of Polish jurisdiction. Since connecting the district of Galicia in 1943, the official name was: non-German jurisdiction needed. Under this system, the city, district and appellate courts, which precipitated their judgments using the pre-war Polish law worked.*⁷

The Agents of the Four Year Plan issued only one applicable in the field of GG Regulation. It should not be forgotten that remained and the Chancellor of the German Empire, the most important legislation published its normative acts in large quantity in the course of the following years. During the occupation, even those normative acts were enacted for GG, those of other central organs of the Third Reich as Interior Minister, Justice Minister, Labor Minister, Finance Minister, Defense Minister General Representative adopted for the administrative affairs of the Empire and General Manager for work. Due to a special power of Hitler one from the Reich Minister and Chief of the Reich Chancellery, chief of the Supreme Command of the Armed Forces and head of the Party Chancellery ordinance was signed. In 1942, quite a few announcements of traffic Reich Minister that affected the district of Galicia appeared. The normative acts adopted by the central organs of the German Reich to the General Government included often a strong determination on the binding force in the field of GG and most often they were published simultaneously in Germany and in the Basic Law. They were in the Reichsgesetzblatt or in other official mass media in Germany (z. B. in the realm worksheet) and in the Official Gazette for the General Government published (including the normative acts, which regulated substantive criminal law, for. example, the Regulation on the exercise of service penal power in the new territories of 3 January 1943 RGBI I, page 1 2). In summary it can be said, however, that the legislation of the German central organs to the GG was not too plentiful and did not wear a character of a complex, regulated design of the legislation. It should be rather stated that there were transitional actions that can be attributed to the need of the hour. Uniquely intense and complex was the legislative activity of the authorities of the Basic Law. Regulation on the exercise of punitive power service in the new territories of 3 January 1943 RGBI I, pp 1-2). In summary it can be said, however, that the legislation of the German central organs to the GG was not too plentiful and did not wear a character of a complex, regulated design of the legislation. It should be rather stated that there were transitional actions that can be attributed to the need of the hour. Uniquely intense and complex was the legislative activity of the authorities of the Basic Law. Regulation on the exercise of punitive power service in the new territories of 3 January 1943 RGBI I, pp 1-2). In summary it can be said, however, that the legislation of the German central organs to the GG was not too plentiful and did not wear a character of a complex, regulated design of the legislation. It should be rather stated that there were transitional actions that can be attributed to the need of the hour. Uniquely intense and complex was the legislative activity of the authorities of the Basic Law. was controlled design of the legislation. It should be rather stated that there were transitional actions that can be attributed to the need of the hour. Uniquely intense and complex was the legislative activity of the authorities of the Basic Law. was controlled design of the legislation. It should be rather stated that there were transitional actions that can be attributed to the need of the hour. Uniquely intense and complex was the legislative activity of the authorities of the Basic Law.

This is why the voice in question dissimulates itself. The ultimate object of literary aspiration is not one of which its author or its reader need be aware. What is "marvelous" about the song of the Sirens is that "it actually existed, it was ordinary and at the same time secret" ("Sirens" 443). The song was heard, and in such a way that it allowed more discerning hearers to heed a secret strangeness within ordinary singing. It stands in for the literary text, which, like the encounter with the Sirens, belongs to "strange powers," to "the abyss" ("Sirens" 443). To hear the abyssal song of the Sirens is to realize that an abyss has opened in every utterance; and that any utterance, even the indexical "I," is enough to entice those who heard it to disappear into an abyss. But just as the literary writer is unable to realize the impossible "object," to allow the poem to become a thing, the sailor cannot reach the source of the song.

It is for this reason that the Sirens' song can never be said to be never actually present. Rather, it only implies the direction of the true sources of the song; the song of the Sirens is "only a song still to come," a song that would lead its listener toward "that space where the singing would really begin" ("Sirens" 443). The Sirens seduce because of the remoteness of their song; their song is only the attraction of a song to come. Likewise, the unattainable ideal of the literary "object" is seductive because of its very unattainability. Those sailors, who are led toward the source by the Sirens' song, steer their ships onto the rocks that surround the Sirens' isle; finding that in reaching the ostensible source of the song, there is nothing but death, they "disappear." The negation that the literary author would address implicates the author, who is unable to undertake the task he or she sets himself or herself in the first person. Likewise, the sailors discover in this region that music itself is absent, that the goal is unattainable; there is no attainable literary "object," no possibility of making the literary work into a thing. From this perspective, the writer is too early because the goal recedes, because the work is unrealizable, because she can never wait long enough. The sailor has always weighed anchor too soon; the source of the song is always infinitely distant; they die broken-hearted because they have failed not once but many times. But the writer is also too late; the goal has been overshoot, the writer is originally unfaithful to his impossible goal.

Ultimately, the search for the "essence" of the song, its source and its well-spring, disappoints. And yet, though the Sirens' song seems to promise a marvelous beyond to which it can never deliver us, we should not regard it as a lie. The song to come will never make itself present, yet it exists as the "hither side" of essentialization. And the search for the "object" of literature remains an admirable one. Blanchot unfolds this analysis through the example of Ulysses. But his Ulysses is not Homer's. For Blanchot, Ulysses becomes Homer himself, becomes the writer of his own Odyssey: not only a traveler whose journey secretly figures an authorial itinerary, but a literary author himself, who has set out to write a novel.

Now it is true, Blanchot concedes, Ulysses did overcome the Sirens in a certain way. Indeed, he has himself bound to the mast, his wrists and ankles tied, in

order to observe them, to pass through what no other human being had endured. He endures the song; his crew, ears plugged, admire his mastery. Ulysses appears all the more impressive for the way his response to the song of Sirens allows him and the sailors he commands to regain a mastery that was challenged or had been lost: the mastery over song itself. Indeed, Ulysses' apparent courage allows the sailors to regain their grip on the human activity of singing; they are no longer daunted by the inhumanity of the Sirens' song. Moreover, Ulysses' actions cause the Sirens, who figure for the lost, sought-after "object" of literature, to understand that the song is nothing special: it is merely a human song that sounds inhuman, and the Sirens are merely animals with the appearance of beautiful women. The Sirens can no longer delude themselves that they bear a privileged relationship with the song they thought was in their power. They recognize themselves in the sailors over whom they once had power, for they are fated to remain as far away from what they seek as the sailors. In an extraordinary turn, this knowledge turns the Sirens into real women; they become human because they belong, with the sailors, on the hither side of the origin they too would seek.[12]

It would appear, then, that the literary object is, in the end, just a special kind of language, an imitative echo of the song that men have always sung to themselves. The literary work that would strive to be something more than another cultural artifact, more than a novel that would reflect the world back to itself, must be content with this modest role. Just as the Sirens become real women, the unattainable literary object becomes a mere goal among other goals; the literary writer is a human being like other human beings. Indeed, we might even condemn the writer for holding out such a ridiculous dream.

But the story is more complex. Blanchot suggests that although the author might appear to want to strike out and make a thing of words, the literary writer is held back by cowardice. Blanchot condemns Ulysses because he exposes the Sirens' song for what it is without exposing himself to the risk of seeking its source. The apparent bravery of his self-exposure to the Sirens belies a certain cowardice, for Ulysses will not confront the greater mystery here: that of the relation between human and more-than-human that is at stake in singing itself. While the sailors might believe Ulysses is heroic, Blanchot knows that Ulysses does not want to succumb to the desire that would lead him toward the source of the Song. Ulysses is reluctant to "fall," wanting to maintain his mastery. He cannot let himself "disappear," but would endure and save for posterity the experience that is granted to him because of his uncanny "privilege." The writer conceals a similar reluctance, simultaneously heeding the abyss in every utterance and refusing to heed it, refusing to hear what would cause him to disappear and would overcome his powers. Like Ulysses, who would endure the Sirens' song without letting himself be seduced by it, the writer merely feigns adventurousness.

However, Ulysses' cunning ploy to stop the ears of his crew with wax and have himself bound to the mast of his ship cannot preserve him from the Sirens. The novelist, in the same way, cannot withhold himself from the effects of the lan-

guage he employs. Unbeknownst to Ulysses, and, indeed, unbeknownst to the sailors who watch him grimace in ecstasy, he does indeed succumb to the enchantment of the Sirens. Ulysses is not free of the Sirens; his technical mastery does not prevent them from enticing him into the other voyage which is, he explains, the voyage of the récit--of a song that has been recounted and, for this reason, is made to seem harmless, "an ode which has turned into an episode" ("Sirens" 445). Ulysses' ruses do not prevent his "fall." Although it appears that Ulysses emerges from his encounter with the Sirens unscathed, returning to Ithaca to reclaim his wife, his son, and his domestic hearth, he drowns just as others have fallen before him. Ulysses is ensorcelled by the Sirens and "dies"; he has embarked on another voyage.

Likewise, the literary writer appears able to navigate successfully through the process of literary creation and is able to accomplish the literary work. Readers admire the fact that books are produced, that literature remains important, reading, perhaps, the biography of the writer who wrote the novels on their shelves, or of the vicissitudes of their composition. This is the novelist who has exhibited a mastery of language and whose language, upon closer examination, reveals what is extraordinary about all language. But the novelist is the virtuoso who re-invents our world and enriches our language. However, the novelist, unbeknownst to himself or herself, reveals a caesura at the heart of the process of literary creativity that is the condition of the possibility of literature. Blanchot writes of an experience whose inscription in the novel escapes author and reader, but that nevertheless makes the novel possible. He writes of a secret struggle at the heart of Ulysses' encounter with the Sirens that is, he claims, the very struggle that marks the birth of the novel.

How might one explain this "other" voyage? Now Blanchot is not on the trail of a secret intention that, beneath the conscious will of the novelist, would lead the commentator toward a reserve that remains undiscovered by literary critics or psychologists. As he writes, "No one can sail away with the deliberate intention of reaching the Isle of Capri"; the other voyage is marked by "silence, discretion, forgetfulness" ("Sirens" 445-6). It cannot be undertaken as just another task to be accomplished. Silence, discretion, and forgetfulness dissimulate the voyage from the narrative of the novel--this is why, indeed, the author does not know of the fascination that rules over what he takes to be "his" creation.

Yes, Ulysses is a cowardly figure who seeks to preserve himself against his disappearance, but he really does "fall" or "disappear" nonetheless; the encounter with the Sirens overcomes his mastery. Although we can imagine Ulysses regaling Penelope and Telemachus with stories of his exploits, there is one tale he would be unable to recount. If Ulysses were to begin one day on a book of reminiscences, if he were, as Blanchot suggests, to become Homer himself and tell the story of his exploits by narrating the first story, an entire dimension of the encounter with the Sirens would hold itself in reserve. But it is this encounter with the Sirens that al-

lows the author to assume the power to write. Ulysses-Homer could not begin his book without having undertaken the journey as Ulysses.

It follows that for every Homer, every novelist, there is, for Blanchot, always and already a drowned Ulysses. The novelist will have already undertaken an Odyssey, albeit one whose memory conceals itself from him. In order to write an account of his adventures, Ulysses-Homer will draw on his memories of the real journey; but he will also, unbeknownst to him, have undertaken his encounter with the Sirens in another dimension. In asking us to entertain the notion that Ulysses and Homer were one and the same person, Blanchot separates out the moments of the composition of the novel in accordance with the two versions of the story of Ulysses' encounter that he recounts.

One might imagine Ulysses-Homer sitting down in peace to begin his memoirs. Telemachus and Penelope are close by; he writes under the protection of his home, his Kingdom, and is confident in the powers that accrue to him as a novelist. But even as he picks up his pen to write, Ulysses-Homer undergoes a peculiar transformation: this novelist is no longer the real Ulysses who cleverly defeated the Sirens, but the "other" Ulysses, one who is stirred by the dream that he could follow the song to its source. This Ulysses sets himself the impossible goal of laying bare the power of song itself, and as such, must be defeated in this aim, which demands, as its toll, that he, Ulysses, disappear as Ulysses. Likewise, no novelist as a novelist can endure this disappearance. The source of writing does not reveal itself to him. In refusing to allow itself to be measured by the wiliness and native cunning of Ulysses, the source envelops Ulysses himself, drowning him as it drowned the Sirens when they became real women. The Odyssey--and this name stands in for any novel--is the tombstone not only of the Sirens, but of Ulysses the sea-captain, the adventurer. The fact that the real Ulysses survived his encounter with the Sirens does not mean that the other Ulysses can secure his grasp upon the source, the power of writing itself. That power is denied him because he can never reach it as Ulysses. He falls, he must fall (and he even wants to fall) because he cannot seize upon that which he would seek.

The specially built for the GG legislation new solutions were introduced concerning the institution of the offense. Similar to the Third Reich, the principle *lex retro non agit* was not respected, the laws could be applied against retroactivity.

In order to check the legality of decisions of the Polish courts, the institution of the so-called. Verification law was introduced. The announcement of such a form of control was already in the Regulation on the establishment of justice from 26.10.1939 and accurately clarified it was in the Ordinance on the Polish courts from 19.02.1940. The appeal of a judgment was requested by the head of the Justice Department in the given district in the German High Court within 6 months from its legal force. As a prerequisite was a violation of the public interest. The German high court could approve the decision or cancel it. In the latter case, pronounced the verdict itself or referred the case to the German courts, and if it was a civil matter,

Characteristic of the criminal situation in the GG was the fact that the review law came into force retroactively. All decisions of the Polish courts, which entered into force after 31 July 1938, could be reviewed. From this for Poland anyway unfavorable principle a broad exception has been made yet. In particularly relevant cases if the decision violated the interests of the German nation, the decision could be reviewed without any consideration of the time that had elapsed since the date of its legal effect. The decision on the review of the decision could be taken by GG in such a situation by the head of the justice department.* 18

A fundamental normative act in the field of substantive criminal law was the regulation on the control of violence from 31.10.1939. At the beginning of the existence of the Basic Law, a catalog was separated from matters that were of interest for the safety of the occupier most essential. Among them were counted:

- acts of violence against the rich and against the German authorities in the GG;
- willful damage done to institutions of the German authorities and their labor organizations or institutions of public utility;
- Call or encouragement to disobey regulations or orders of the German authorities;
- acts of violence against the Germans because they belong to the German nation;
- arson of property of the Germans ".

The responsibility also helped the assistants and instigator. Punishable was the attempt of these actions, the concept of an experiment designed far. "Those who conspired to commit a crime, whoever comes to this, with others to an agreement who is offering the commission of a crime or accepting such an offer." The offense also referred to people who had learned of the commission intent of the criminal offenses and of which the authorities or the person at risk have not been informed.* 19

The regulation on gun ownership from 09/12/1939, so even from before the foundation of the Basic Law should apply to persons with weapons, ammunition, hand grenades, explosives or other war equipment possessed. The provisions of that Regulation have been maintained in the Basic Law also expanded accordingly and "who gets a message about an illegal gun ownership by another person and notifying the authorities can also be subject to a penalty."* 20

During the occupation, the transfer of solutions in the field of substantive criminal law of the Third Reich could have happened to the Basic Law. The easiest way were the regulations of Hitler, which entered into force in both the Empire and in GG (they were also published in the Official Gazette of the Government General).* 21 Another type was the law of the Governor General, which took into account the changes in the law in Germany. This refers, for example, to the introduction of III from. Empire known construction "of a habit offender". The "as strict or as much condemned by criminals that they should be regarded as a constant danger to the community", were from the Polish (non-German) jurisdiction "held to

ensure" or even condemned by the German special courts to death are, if it was made out of consideration for "the protection of the general public or the need for a just retribution." In the realities of the Basic Law, it meant the chance to break the fundamental principles of legality.* 22

Similar to the German Reich the generalization of criminal responsibility for any violations of the applicable provisions in the Basic Law was introduced towards the end of the war. Punishable under Regulation from 10.02.1943 the violation of laws, regulations, orders and decrees of the authorities was too difficult with the intention of "the German integration in the General Government" or hinder it. This also was true for the trial; responsibility also wore the assistants and instigator.* 23

In the General even a few hundred normative acts were (they made *leges speciales* in relation to the Polish and German criminal code is) adopted in which the actions of criminal deeds were told that remain under normal circumstances beyond the scope of criminal law. A wide expanded penalization concerned such areas as cultural activities, work and club activity.* 24

The definitions of the issues were often controlled according to a constant pattern. A standard formula was worded as follows: "Whoever undertakes to act contrary to its provisions shall be punished".* 25

In addition, there was a convenient solution that was that things were expelled from the criminal administrative proceedings in the criminal case. The most frequent general clause was used: "a) Failure to comply with this regulation will be punished in the criminal administrative proceedings; German prosecutors used) ": b) if the punishment does not seem to be sufficient under this procedure should be left to the cause of German plaintive Authority (since 1943 the name was.* 26

The differentiation among the groups of people

A characteristic feature of substantive criminal law in the Basic Law, the difference that annexed by another of the Third Reich territories, was not only to maintain the privileged status of the Germans, but also the differentiation of the legal status of Poles and Jews. Was expressed it in the already adopted in 1939 normative acts. The rules established for the Jews contained more far-reaching and don'ts and saw significantly tougher sanctions for their injuries. As an example the rules on the introduction of the obligation to work for the Polish population of the GG can serve. For the Jews a special regulation on the introduction of compulsory labor was adopted on the same day that still contained stricter regulations.* 27 In the legislative way the Jews of personal liberty, property, freedom of choice of employment, the right to education, the freedom of choice of residence, freedom of movement, were robbed in the overseas trip. It has even introduced the ban to leave the residence.* 28 Since mid-1941, the number of legislative acts adopted exclusively for the Jewish population is drastically reduced. Maybe it is due to the increasing competencies of Himmler in relation to the planned extermination of the Jews.* 29

There is thus another voice and another order of the event; there is a Ulysses who is the shadow of the first who does not return to Ithaca, completing the circle and thereafter settling down to write his memoirs. The novel that Ulysses-Homer writes likewise depends upon his drowned double, who lies at the bottom of the ocean. The human time in which Ulysses-Homer sets himself the task of writing the novel called *The Odyssey* and, indeed, accomplishes it, depends upon the other time--the inordinate instant when he embarks on another journey. The birth of the novel cannot be understood without reference to the aneconomic movement of Ulysses. The psychologist of creativity will never grasp the relationship between the power of creativity and the other voyage to the end of the possible. Nor can the philosopher broach the question of the temporality of time without taking this inordinate instant into account. It is only the critical commentator who could attend to the hidden vicissitudes of the birth of the novel, who is privy to the instant that has secretly inscribed itself in the novel. Blanchot tells us that the novel tells another tale, one unbeknownst to its teller and to an entire industry of cultural reception. I will try to make sense of his claim that the composition of the novel implies a *récit*, with reference to Breton's *Nadja*.

III

The *récit*, a history of French literature might tell us, names a literary form of which Breton's *Nadja*, Duras's *The Malady of Death*, and Blanchot's own *Death Sentence* and *When the Time Comes* are examples: short, novella- or novelette-length fictions that are focused around some central occurrence. As Blanchot writes in "The Sirens' Song," although "the *récit* seems to fulfill its ordinary vocation as a narrative," it nevertheless bears upon "one single episode" in a way that does not strive to narrate "what is believable and familiar" in the manner of the novelist (446).

In Breton's *récit*, this episode is the series of meetings with the young woman who bears its name. In one sense, Breton is aware of the singularity of the *récit*. He insistently rejects conventional genres; *Nadja*, unlike the novel, is not keen to pass for fiction. It does not draw attention to its artifice, keen to present itself as a form of entertainment, as a diverting series of episodes. Breton's *récit* narrates an encounter that is extraordinary not only because the young woman its narrator meets is exceptional but also because this encounter transforms the world. For Clark, *Nadja* "enact[s] an unprecedented mode of writing whose provenance is a new experience of the streets as a space of inspiration and mediation to the unknown" (213). As Clark observes, it is neither simply a fictional work nor an autobiography; it does not relate anecdotes from afar, but indicates its own relation to the events: "the actual writing of the text is affirmed as part of the writer's own exploration of the events he is living" (214). It does not merely imitate Breton's experience but is part of the articulation of an event that escapes the measure of the experiencing "I." The very narration of the encounter with *Nadja* transgresses the ordinary conceptions of the ego, consciousness, the will, and freedom. Breton is not, like the Blanchotian novelist, the creator-God who freely and sovereignly sustains

his creation--a God for whom anything is possible in the field of his creation. His *récit* would interrupt both the assurance of the novelist who creates and preserves a world and also the assurance of the reader, for whom the world the novel imitates is the same world he or she inhabits.

Breton's *récit* narrates an extraordinary event; but, for Blanchot, it also names the unattainable "object" of literary fascination, the source of the Sirens' song. He insists that the *récit* does not recall or re-stage the event, but brings it about:

The *récit* is not the narration of an event, but that event itself, the approach to the place where that event is made to happen [*le lieu où celui-ci est appelé à s'produire*]-an event which is yet to come and through whose power of attraction the tale can hope to come into being, too. ("Sirens" 447)

How should we understand this apparently self-contradictory claim? It might appear that Breton seeks to write about his encounter with Nadja, but his *récit* hides another and more fundamental encounter, one that is the condition of possibility of any narration. The event that Breton would narrate is joined in his *récit* by another narration and another event: that of the interruption of his capacities as an author, the figure for which, in Blanchot, is the song of the Sirens. Breton, in short, has forgotten what he set out to remember; he has lost what he sought to find.

How might one understand this claim? To recall: the sailors were too impatient and dropped anchor because they thought they had reached what they sought. But the only way to "find" the source of song was, Blanchot said, to undergo an involuntary "disappearance." Just as it is impossible to endure this disappearance in "human" or ordinate time, it would also be impossible for anyone or anything, the *récit* included, to endure the event. Ulysses is condemned only to approach the event until he "disappears." Likewise, the author of a *récit* can do no more than approach until he too "disappears." The very notion of a "patient" approach to the source of the song of the Sirens is that of a relinquishment of will; the author cannot simply choose to become "patient," to "disappear," or to "fall," but passively undergoes "disappearance," and in so doing is caught up in what happens as the *récit*.

In writing of Nadja, in attempting to re-experience his encounter with her at what appears to be one remove from the "real" event, Breton the writer undergoes a "disappearance." Is this what Breton understands when he asks, in the last lines of his book, "Who goes here? Is it you, Nadja? ... Is it only me? Is it myself?" (144). These lines, responding like an echo to the first words of Nadja, "Who am I?" mean for Blanchot "that the whole narrative is but the redoubling of the same question maintained in its spectral difference" (*Infinite* 420). Both questions put the authorial identity under question. Was it Breton who wrote *Nadja*, or did he vacate his position, allowing the encounter with Nadja to have, as it were, written itself?

In writing of Nadja, thereby granting her an ideal existence, Breton allows us to hear nothingness digging tirelessly in the name that is the name of his book. But

who, then, is Breton the writer? For Blanchot, Breton's *récit* testifies in an extraordinary way to the encounter with the Sirens that redoubles his enigmatic encounter with Nadja. True, Breton met Nadja and was intrigued by her. He set out to write a book without genre, a work that related this encounter and this fascination. But in writing *Nadja*, in recasting his adventure on an ideal plane, apparently subordinating words and sentences in order to tell his tale, Breton removes himself yet further from her. Writing of Nadja, he loses her anew and has to make do with a papery Nadja, made of words. But the redoubled loss of Nadja demands another loss, for Breton yields himself up as a writer, that is, as the one who freely, sovereignly, would sign his name to the book that is ostensibly his. Breton does not do so voluntarily, nor, afterwards, is it given to him to remember, at least in a straightforward and unambiguous way, the vicissitudes of literary creation. Nevertheless, the attempt to write about a marvelous moment itself requires his "disappearance" as an author. It is as if the act of narrating set a trap for him. To take up writing, to narrate an encounter, is to give oneself up as a lure to the trap that threatens to snap shut. That the author escapes it, recovering in order to finish a work, is not a tribute to his ingenuity. To be sure, Breton finishes *Nadja*, but his narrative depends upon the other journey he was compelled to undertake as soon as he took up his pen. He is lost, as Blanchot writes, "in a preliminary Narrative," in an event that begins when he starts to write (*Infinite* 414).

Homer's *Odyssey* traces the journey of Ulysses to his homeland, but it does not bear upon those intermittences and discontinuities that would expose the economy of the journey to a troubling event. The Ulysses of the novel is always safe; even when he risks himself, he does so assured of his survival. He is always the man who undergoes adventures without risking a profound self-alteration: his ruses allow him to accomplish deeds that appear brilliant, but are actually hollow. This Ulysses seems to have mastered the song itself, to have mastered this power and to be able to recall the vicissitudes of his encounter at leisure, writing safely beside Penelope and Telemachus. But the watery death of the other Ulysses, for whom *The Odyssey* is a tomb, is testament to the fact that the contrivance of Ulysses could never allow him to endure what he cannot endure in the first person.

The novelist believes, like Ulysses-Homer, that he is in command of that which he would narrate, but Blanchot argues otherwise. He is, on Blanchot's account, like the wily Ulysses; he can only become a novelist by refusing to relinquish himself to the call that solicits him. If he is able to write books, it is only because he is cut off from the original source of his "inspiration" by his own ruses and machinations. But his work attests to an inhuman effort to heed what the novelist cannot endure: another narration, a *récit*. The Blanchotian *récit* marks the memory of the experience that the novel leaves behind in order to become a novel. The struggle at the birth of the novel is therefore the struggle to do away with the event to which the *récit* bears witness, that is, to leave the "dead" or "disappeared" Ulysses in the water, to abandon death in favor of the deathless life of the whole, discontinuity in favor of absence, the absence of work for the work that gathers everything togeth-

er. In leaving behind the *récit*, the novel also leaves the event itself behind. The novel is, for all its riches, only a narration of that which it has already lost. Yes, it dazzles; the novel reproduces the richness and detail of the world. The Blanchotian novelist dreams of Unity, where discontinuity would be merely a sign of the failure of the understanding, a mark of our finitude. In this way, the novel exerts, in advance, a grasp of the whole, of the time and space in which everything unfolds. The Blanchotian novel does not accomplish an absolute invention, creating something ungoverned by pre-existing rules. But in another sense, it is the Blanchotian *récit* that marks itself into the opening of the novel as the novel is marked as an inventive event. It is only the critical commentator who can attend to the happening of an event that itself reinvents the notion of invention and the inventor, for it no longer refers to the contrivance of an ingenious person. The novelty of this event is not that of a new art, instrument, or process. The invention that the *récit* "is" (beyond the intentions of the author of the novel) happens each time singularly and without precedent, cutting across what offers itself too readily to appropriation, identification, and subjectivation.

Blanchot's account of the "other" voyage of Ulysses stages the joining of the inhuman voice of the *récit* to that of the novelist. The journey of this Ulysses is not circular. The primordial relation through which he would constitute himself as a self-centered and hedonistic subject is interrupted by a call that contests his self-realization. The closed circuit of his interiority is opened; Ulysses no longer experiences himself as an "I can" who can pass unhindered through the finite order of being. The song of the Sirens is unintegratably foreign. Ulysses can only give himself over in response to this call and, thus summoned, is prevented from recoiling or turning back upon himself. The infinite resistance of the song to Ulysses' powers cannot be understood in terms of a clash of contrary wills, because Ulysses is precisely no longer "there." Ulysses cannot exist with, or alongside, the song. Ulysses' "disappearance" means that he is henceforward unable to unfold his potentialities in a realm in which willed action is possible. No higher synthesis will allow him to mediate the song of the Sirens and integrate it into his own endeavors. Rather, he is co-constituted by the call; his selfhood is simultaneously economic and aneconomic. He is defined by the wiliness and the cleverness that attest to the auto-affirmative strength and vitality that permit his boundless curiosity; but he is also governed by a lethal susceptibility to the call of the Sirens. At once, Ulysses is driven toward what satisfies the circular demand that would permit his economic return to himself and toward the aneconomic "experience" that denies this return. It is precisely this irresolvable play of economy and aneconomy that allows Ulysses to stand in for both the writer of the novel and the *récit*. It is this play that determines the relationship between novel and *récit*, preventing their resolution into a higher synthesis, that is, the incorporation of the *récit* as an episode in a novel. But the *récit* does not name a literary genre that is separable from the novel, just as the Blanchotian event would involve beings not separable from a certain order of civilization. Novel and *récit* are moments of the same movement of invention. The dis-

sension between novel and *récit* in Blanchot's writings can be found in any act. As such, all synthesizing, economic movements are provisional.

One can read "The Sirens' Song" in terms of a struggle in a certain narrative recounting, concluding that the relationship between novel and *récit* bears upon a deeper struggle that has shaped our civilization, since the kind of narrative recounting one discovers in the novel is the sort of story--the story of stories, the narration that gathers up all other stories as such--that Western civilization has told to itself. There is no doubt that the narratorial voice of the novel is that of the Ulyssean subject who would recount episodes in a certain sequence. But the possibility of narration is predicated upon a recollection that is already determined by a certain conception of time. "The Sirens' Song" bears upon the condition of possibility of narration.

What is it that permits this incredible recollection of an event that is said to escape all memory? How does Blanchot explain the relationship he describes between the "other" voyage, in which Ulysses drowns and is lost, and the voyage of the novel, in which this drowned Ulysses is forgotten and the living Ulysses--the one who, miraculously, survives his own death (understood as his disappearance *qua* Ulysses)--sails back to his homeland, to his wife and his son, to the *okios*, the family hearth?

In order to address this question (the way in which I choose to present the question of the condition of possibility in Blanchot's theoretical writings in general), I will supplement Blanchot's story of the two voyages of Ulysses with my own story of a third Ulysses. This is the Ulysses-Blanchot who has followed the others and watched them rise from the bottom of the sea, and, furthermore, who still remembers his fall (and the fall of the Sirens). This Ulysses-Blanchot is the writer of the story at the beginning of *Le Livre à Venir*.

IV

In Blanchot's retelling of the encounter with the Sirens, *The Odyssey* becomes a memoir: it is the story Ulysses tells of his return, of the completion of the circle. Ulysses not only undergoes his encounter with the Sirens, but he relates this encounter himself. Nothing happens to him that he cannot relate: his is the memory that can recall everything, lifting it out of oblivion and recounting it in turn. Ulysses becomes Homer, the virtuoso of memory, the adventurer who, after his adventures, can tell his own story to entertain others. Ulysses-Homer writes, in the narratorial voice, of his triumph and his return.

Yes, Ulysses returns to his family, to his kingdom, and sets right all wrongs. But the Ulysses who returns to Ithaca, to the family hearth, to settle down and write, is followed by another Ulysses. Blanchot, in the guise of a sea-traveler, has followed Ulysses on both his voyages, remembering what Ulysses does not and disclosing this gap in Ulysses-Homer's memory in "The Sirens' Song." Who would recognize this worn and threadbare Ulysses who returns to his home in order to remember what outstrips the memory of his homeland? And yet it is this other, hypermnestic "memory" that will allow him to write of the journey at the heart of

the novel and the *récit*. This Ulysses, ineluctably marked by death, has been vouchsafed a secret that cost him his intimate relationship with his and any homeland, rendering his Odyssey infinite. This Blanchotian Ulysses drowns; and at the same time, he is able to bring us, his readers, tidings of the voyages that the literary writer has undertaken.

It is this Blanchotian Ulysses who waits at the elbow of the Ulysses-Homer, composer of *The Odyssey*. This Blanchotian Ulysses remembers the other story, the exile or the wandering of Ulysses. As the critical commentator who follows Ulysses to lose and then rediscover him, Blanchot triumphs because he alone can retrace this journey. Blanchot is capable of remembering what Ulysses forgets; moreover, since he, too, has written *récits* and novels, he can also remember what he had to forget as a literary author. His is the power to bear witness to the extraordinary happening of the *récit* but, as such, is a mastery of that which cannot be mastered--a tale of an event which will not allow itself to be recounted.

How are we to understand the adventures of this Blanchotian Ulysses? Blanchot is not the adept who has had an experience and would teach others about it; he does not keep a secret. Rather, he remains vigilant, on the look-out, waiting for the chance for his writing to be seized by an unknown current. He relinquishes his grip and allows his mastery to be taken from him, but this is what allows him to escape the trap, to recover himself from the preliminary *récit*. Blanchot is thus open to what the author of *Nadja* is not. He writes, with "The Sirens' Song," a *récit* of the *récit*, a text dense with beginnings, a text that belongs alongside every literary-critical essay he has written and every work of literature. This is why his writing is able to invent, why it says the true, why the accomplishment it would realize is much more decisive than the production of an aesthetics. For the *récit* of the *récit* would reveal the historicity of history in the shining out of events like the light that sparkles up from waves of water. Beginning and rebeginning, flashing up and into nothing, it is of the aleatory, of the event, of the instant without program and without project of which Blanchot would write. He shows us that Ithaca is traversed by waves, that there is no place of safety to which Ulysses, each of us, any of us, might return.

Notes

1. Lewis and Sandra Hinchman's edited collection *Memory, Identity, Community* makes a convincing case for such a turn, showing how the human sciences are moving toward models of explanation of human behavior drawing on narrative models rather than nomological models.

2. Carr's *Time, Narrative, and History* presents a powerful account of narrative as the temporal structure of human existence.

3. As Lewis and Sandra Hinchman argue, "a community's stories offer members a set of canonical symbols, plots, and characters through which they can interpret reality and negotiate--or even create--their world. The culture 'speaks to itself' as members replicate these canonical forms in their own lives" (235). Like-

wise, Alistair Macintyre and Charles Taylor have argued that our understanding of the world as individuals depends upon an intelligibility granted by communal life.

4. As Georges Van Den Abbeele reminds us, "to the left's investment in 'community activism' as a strategic retreat designed to reconstruct and build anew a base of popular support in the wake of severe electoral defeats by the right in England and the United States, corresponds the Thatcherite and Reaganite discourse on the return of juridical and managerial responsibilities to the level of 'local communities,' a cynical euphemism for the dismantling of the welfare state at the hands of so-called private enterprise" (xi). The essays in the volume he introduces provide a valuable attempt from various perspectives to reinvest community with a new sense.

5. For example, he shows us how Kermode's *The Sense of an Ending* depends on the separability of the sense of the real and reality itself that Carr convincingly overturns (9). Likewise, he claims that Barthes demarcates art and life, depending once again on a model of representation as the imposition of a structure on the "real" world (9).

6. As Blanchot shows in *The Work of Fire*, it is not in order to represent the world that Lautréamont gave *The Chants of Maldoror* the body of a monumental thing, always pushing it toward impenetrability despite the coherence and the eloquence of his language. *Maldoror* strives to suffice to itself, to exist as a monad of words that reflects nothing but words. The sonority and rhythmic mobility of the poem is a sign of the attempt to render itself sovereign, to conquer its own space, literature's space, and remain there. Literature, as Blanchot argues in dozens of essays, attends to an experience of language itself that escapes all kinds of narrativization (see *Work* 162-175).

7. See the retelling of Orpheus' descent into Hades to rescue Eurydice in *The Space of Literature* (171-176) and the meetings between Theseus and the Sphinx in *The Infinite Conversation* (17-20) and Narcissus and Eurydice in *The Writing of the Disaster* (125-128). For a commentary on "Orpheus's Gaze," see my "The Paradoxes of Fidelity." For a commentary on the passages on Theseus and the Sphinx, see my "The Sphinx's Gaze."

8. Timothy Clark has some marvellous pages on Blanchot's notion of the *récit* in *Derrida, Heidegger, Blanchot*. Derrida has written at length on Blanchot's notion of the *récit* in *Parages*.

9. *Logos*, as Heidegger remarks, means more than language simply understood as a collection of words: "it means the fundamental faculty of being able to talk discursively, and, accordingly, to speak" (305). The human being can use language in a way the animal cannot since, according to Heidegger, "the animal lacks the ability to apprehend as a being whatever it is open for" (306). It is the way in which the human being comports itself to beings that separates it from human beings.

10. In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas argues that we are all--all of us, philosophers and non-philosophers--mediators or relays of a certain totality whether we

assume, disavow, or transform its movement. Today, in the West, Levinas asks us to renew philosophy and with it to renew our civilization in response to a call that has gone unheard--the call of infinity, the infinite. This call resounds within the totality itself: we hear it, whether we know it or not--whether we respond to it or deny its unbridled force. Levinas asks us to overturn the "egology" or "economics" upon which what he calls totality is predicated by hearkening to this call. Ulysses, the voyager of Homer's *Odyssey*, is the authentic figure of this egology; his travels are, in turn, a perfect figure for an economic return upon the ego. As Levinas remarks: "the itinerary of philosophy remains that of Ulysses, whose adventure in the world was only a return to his native island--a complacency in the Same, an unrecognition of the Other (48). See, for an examination of the relationship between Blanchot and Levinas, my "The Sphinx's Gaze" and William Large's "Impersonal Existence."

11. On the other hand, there are authors for whom the novel must attain the status of an object sufficient unto itself. Can Sarraute's *Tropisms* or Beckett's *The Unnameable* be regarded as novels? It would be here that the novel unravels itself or approaches the condition of what Blanchot might call the "poem-thing." One might admit that there are novels that are non-representational (Blanchot's own *Thomas the Obscure* would be an example, or indeed *The Chants of Maldoror* [see note 6 above]), but the *roman* of "The Sirens' Song" refers to the hegemonic notion of the novel. Furthermore, the novel cannot separate itself from the practice Blanchot calls writing. As I will make clear, *roman* and *récitare* bound up with one another in a complex economy.

12. Almost as soon as the Sirens become women, Blanchot tells us, they die. But Blanchot tells us nothing of the fabulous animals who are turned into women and undergo their own deaths (and perhaps their own resurrection). He writes of Ulysses' death and resurrection, but Blanchot does not consider the fate of the Sirens after their deaths. Does he, in this silence, speak for them, and, thereby in the place of the women who, when their secret is revealed, die at the bottom of the ocean? In a sense, they have died before they have even begun--before they have been given the chance to begin, before any such chance has been envisaged to explore the source of the song that resounds in the speech they would speak as human women. Crucially, the Sirens die as soon as they become human women, preventing them from uprooting themselves, journeying according to other imperatives and exploring their own form of existence. Deprived of autonomy, determination, or identity, these dead women are more comforting than women who are still alive because they can serve as the screen without depth onto which Ulysses-Blanchot can project his fantasies. Does he exclude the possibility of their return or resurrection, of the story that they might tell about their adventure or their death? "The Sirens' Song" is, perhaps, more complex than this reading would allow since Ulysses, Blanchot tells us, recognizes himself in the Sirens just as the Sirens recognize themselves in the sailors. The non-human females become human and Ulysses recognizes that he, too is in some sense non- or inhuman: he, too, is female or ani-

mal. Ulysses, part-Siren, is claimed by the feminine in a way that he does not realize, just as the Sirens are implicated in the masculine. There is a redistribution of the terms femininity and masculinity beyond a simple polarization of gender here. The scene of tutelage I invoked could be understood in terms of a hetero-affection, an affection that interrupts the economy of the masculine just as it disrupts the economy of the feminine. In this sense, "The Sirens' Song" would attest to a certain feminization of the masculine that has always and already occurred--a feminization that does not happen from outside the masculine but is co-implicated with it, collaborating with and contaminating any notion of a pure masculinity--and, likewise, to a masculinization of the feminine that would co-determine and co-constitute what in the classical sense is taken to be the rigid opposite of masculinity. For a feminist interpretation of Blanchot's writings, see Cixous's *Readings*.

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